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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

Cuba's Diplomatic Gains

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CUBA

diplomatic gains



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Cuba's efforts to develop normal relations with other nations reached a high level during 1972. Fidel Castro made official visits to 11 nations. Cuba established diplomatic relations with 11 countries—not the same 11—and expanded its political, economic, and cultural ties with many others.

Havana's increased participation in world affairs stems in part from a major shift—initiated in 1968—away from unequivocal support of armed revolutionary violence and into a more conventional pursuit of closer economic and political ties with other nations. The pursuit started in Latin America, but spread to Africa and the Middle East, where Castro has modest aid programs going and where he keeps his revolutionary credentials in order by lending support to several insurgency efforts.

Cuba's relations with the Soviet bloc have also grown closer, although not always in ways to Castro's taste. For example, Cuban adherence to CEMA and the economic agreements reached last year with the Soviet Union seem to have given Moscow a greater role in the formulation and execution of Cuban economic policy. Castro is bound to chafe under such restrictions. This will put some pressure on him to look for alternatives. For the present, he seems to prefer pursuing his diplomatic successes in the Third World to undertaking moves toward a rapprochement with the United States.

Although Castro has softened his anti-American oratory and has kept flexible the conditions he sets for dealings with the United States, he seems confident that the OAS sanctions policy has failed and that he therefore has no need to make concessions.

Latin America

The change to a more rational foreign policy—initially tentative and cautious—concentrated at the outset on a few selected nations of Latin America. Castro has long seen himself as a modern-day Bolivar, destined to lead Latin America in its “second war of independence”—this time from the US. In his eyes, the US was responsible for many of Cuba's economic difficulties and had replaced Spain as the colonial power in the hemisphere. His aggressive support of insurgency was designed to reduce, if not eliminate, US influence in Latin America through a sort of revolutionary confrontation. Having discovered these tactics were non-productive, Castro turned to more orthodox methods to build his influence in the region and to undermine the US and OAS policy of isolating Cuba.

In these efforts, Castro has been able to capitalize on several factors.

- The increasing tide of nationalism throughout Latin America.
- The accession to power in Chile, Peru, Panama, and Ecuador of regimes that wish to demonstrate their independence of the US.
- The decline of Cuban support for local revolutionary groups has reduced fears of Cuban subversion in many Latin American nations.
- The belief of some governments that the US may embarrass them by suddenly reversing its policy on Cuba.

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Raul Castro and Peruvian officers watch Cuban military exercise, December 72.



Fidel in Moscow, June 72.



Fidel in Czechoslovakia, June 72.



Fidel welcomes Mongolian Prime Minister Tsedenbal to Cuba, November 72.

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Cuban Contacts With Latin America Since 1968

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	Visited by Cuban athletic teams	Sent athletic teams to Cuba	Technical international conference	Sent technical delegations from Cuba	Trade delegations from Cuba	Sent trade delegations to Cuba	Diplomatic relations	Trade	Other
Argentina	•			•					
Bahamas					•				
Barbados									
Bolivia									
Brazil									
British West Indies				•					
Chile	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Colombia		•	•	•	•				
Costa Rica		•	•	•					
Dominican Republic		•	•						
Ecuador									
El Salvador									
French West Indies				•			•	•	
French Guiana							•		
Guatemala									
Guyana			•	•		•			•
Haiti									
Honduras									
Jamaica		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mexico		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Netherlands Antilles				•		•			
Nicaragua		•	•						
Panama	•	•	•	•	•				
Paraguay									
Peru	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Surinam					•	•			
Trinidad & Tobago				•	•				•
Uruguay									
Venezuela	•	•	•	•	•				

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Nine months ago, Cuba had diplomatic relations with only two Latin American nations—Mexico and Chile. The total is now seven, though most of the additions were small island states in the Caribbean. Diplomatic relations were resumed with Peru in July and established with Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad-Tobago, and Guyana in December. Other nations in the hemisphere, including Venezuela and Panama, are considering closer relations with Havana.

Cuba has used a variety of methods to maintain and increase economic, cultural, and political ties with its Latin neighbors. At Castro's invitation, high-level military delegations from Peru and Chile witnessed combat exercises by the Cuban armed forces and came away impressed. The Cuban news agency, Prensa Latina, opened bureaus in Argentina and Panama, bringing its Latin American total to six. Cuban cultural, athletic, and technical delegations visited at least 11 Latin American nations last year. The provision of relief supplies and a medical team to victims of the Managua earthquake is a recent example of Castro's determination to change his style. Castro has also subdued his language; for example, in his public speeches during the past three years, he has rarely made an explicit call for violence.

This moderate approach does not extend to the Organization of American States itself. Castro has usually reserved his most vituperative language for that organization. Because he has established friendly relations with some of its members, he has recently taken care to differentiate between "progressives" and "reactionaries." Castro's reluctance to offend certain nations may cause him to soften his flamboyant rhetoric against the organization, but there is little chance that he will ever rejoin. He has called for the creation of a "union of Latin American states" that would exclude the US.

Although the intensity of his anti-US oratory has been reduced since September, he was probably attempting first to encourage US politicians who wanted to make Cuba an issue in the US presidential campaign and then to expedite the hijacking talks. Castro, wishing to retain maximum flexibility, has frequently altered the condi-

tions he sets for any dealings with the US. For the present, he seems confident the sanctions policy has failed; thus, he probably sees no need to make meaningful concessions.

The Third World

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Cuban activity in the Third World increased significantly during 1972.

Last year, Cuba established diplomatic relations with six African and Middle Eastern nations: Sierra Leone, Yemen (Aden), Zambia, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritania, and Somalia. In several others, Cuba is attempting to raise its representation from a non-resident to a resident basis. This was accomplished in Mali and Cyprus last year. Relations with Ghana, interrupted in 1966, are expected to be restored early this year.

Despite chronic economic difficulties, Cuba is conducting modest aid programs in Africa. It has sent medical teams and agricultural technicians to at least a half-dozen African nations, but the major part of the Cuban assistance in this area has been of a military nature. For example, there are several hundred Cuban advisers in Guinea, many of whom have been engaged in training the militia and the presidential bodyguard. A similar program has recently begun in Yemen (Aden). Such projects not only increase Cuba's prestige but also enhance Castro's role among Third World leaders. Cuba may be angling for African support in international organizations. The Cuban maneuvers on the Puerto Rico issue in a UN committee last year may lead to other attacks in such bodies against the US that would be more directly related to Cuban interests.

There is another feature of Cuban aid to Africa. When Havana turned away from insurgency in Latin America, it shifted more of its attention in this respect to Africa. It is providing training as well as financial and material assistance

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to several revolutionary groups, primarily the Conakry-based rebel movement which seeks to gain control of Portuguese Guinea.

this shift of emphasis as a means of maintaining his image as a revolutionary leader with less risk of alienating the US or Latin American governments.

The USSR and Eastern Europe

Cuba has developed a closer relationship not only with the countries of Latin America and the Third World, but with the USSR and other countries of Eastern Europe as well. Cuba's poor economic performance, despite large amounts of Soviet aid, has brought increasing pressure from Moscow for more rational economic policies. The pressure has been particularly heavy since Castro's ill-conceived and unsuccessful effort to produce 10 million tons of sugar in 1970 led to severe economic dislocations.

It also led to greater Soviet involvement in the Cuban economy. In December 1970, a Soviet-Cuban Inter-governmental Commission for Economic and Scientific-Technical Collaboration was created. During 1971, Cuba received visits from two high-powered Soviet delegations headed by senior economic ministers. Shortly after Fidel Castro's summer visit to the USSR in 1972, Cuba became a full-fledged member of the Soviet-led Council for Economic Mutual Assistance (CEMA). Although Castro probably can expect some additional assistance from the East European members of CEMA, the organization will in large part serve as a device to press Cuba for more orthodox economic planning while binding it ever more closely to the Communist bloc.

The economic agreements concluded during Castro's visit to the USSR in December 1972 reflect the steady tightening of the Soviet-Cuban knot. Castro described some of the key aspects of the agreements in a televised speech on 3 January, but his presentation suggested that he had paid a bitter price. His subdued attitude suggests that the Soviets may have demanded a still greater role in the formulation and implementation of Cuban

economic policies. Castro may also have been pressed to delegate more responsibility in domestic matters to his subordinates. He probably had to accommodate the Soviets on both points.

Castro is undoubtedly deeply disturbed over the ramifications for Cuba of improving US-Soviet relations. He was excluded from the negotiations that defused the 1962 missile crisis, and he cannot help but feel that Cuban interests might be adversely affected by Moscow's present dealings with the US. Although Castro has paid lip service to Moscow's detente policy, he and other Cuban leaders have occasionally made indirect criticisms along the line that "imperialism's apparent cooperation...is deceptive and false in the long run."

Foreign Initiatives for 1973

Cuba's policy of pushing for normal diplomatic ties in Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East is expected to continue. Castro's scheduled official visits to Mongolia and Yemen (Aden) this year almost certainly will be supplemented by other stops in the Third World. Havana may not manage diplomatic relations with as many nations in 1973 as it did in 1972, but it will undoubtedly concentrate on maintaining and strengthening those ties it has, particularly in Latin America and Africa.

Despite the change in tactics, Castro's goals in Latin America show little change. He still wants most of all to reduce US influence in the hemisphere, discredit the OAS, and secure a major role for Cuba. He will probably work to achieve these goals by trying to take advantage of the momentum achieved in largely neutralizing the OAS sanctions. Although the OAS general assembly may in April further emasculate the sanctions policy, Castro is unlikely to moderate his antipathy toward the organization.

Castro will probably give priority to moving even closer to Chile and Peru, assuming the present administrations stay in power in the two countries. Attention will be paid to the possibilities for expansion of ties with Venezuela, Panama, and perhaps Ecuador. In addition,

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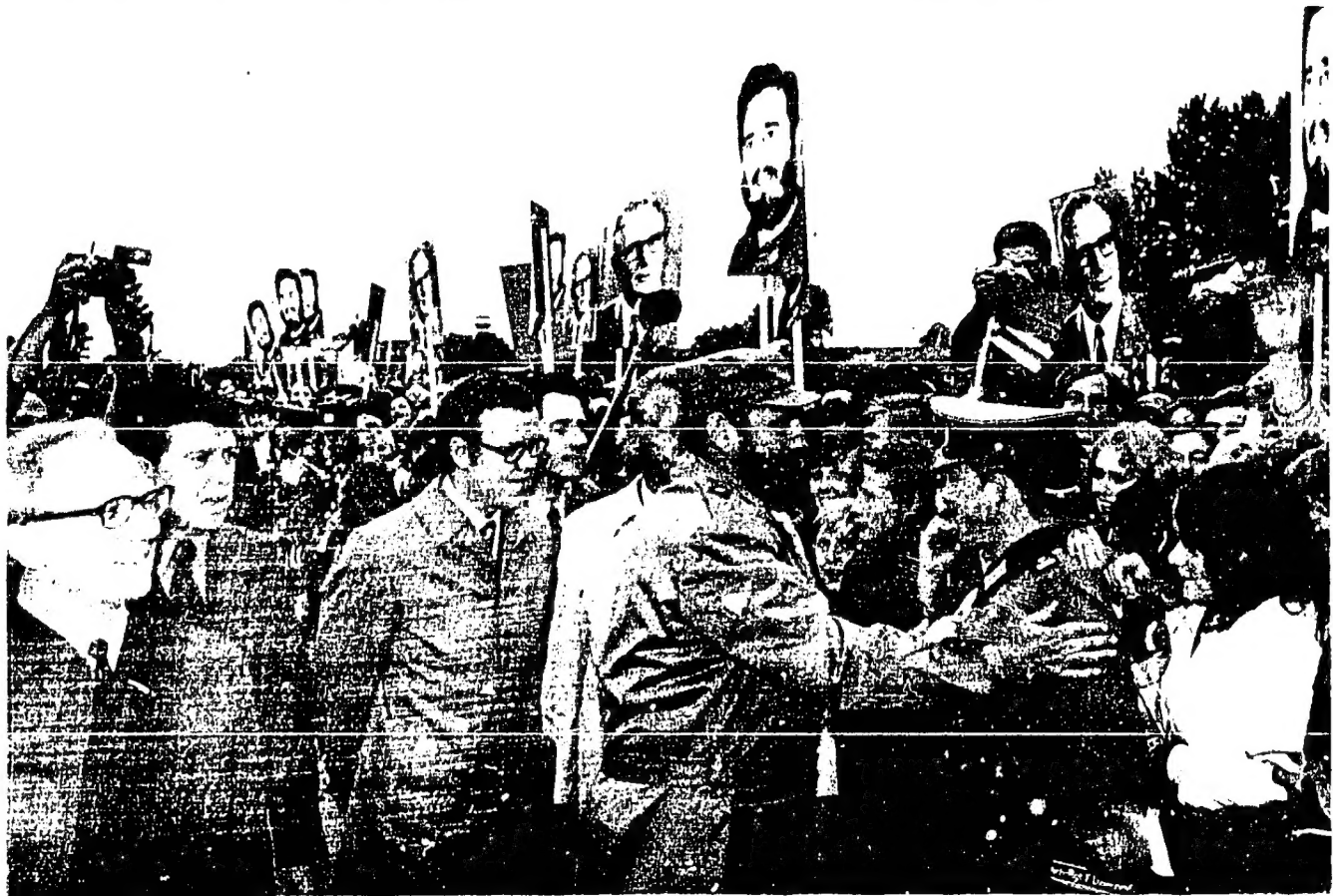
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Fidel greeted by Algerian President Boumedienne.



Fidel in Guinea.



Fidel in East Germany.

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Havana will keep its eye peeled for targets of opportunity—e.g., the possible emergence of a more sympathetic regime in Argentina after the elections this month.

As long as his present more moderate approach meets with success, Castro is unlikely to risk being isolated again by resuming widespread support of Latin American guerrilla movements. Nevertheless, he will still give selected revolutionary groups limited material assistance, some training, and considerable propaganda support, but those selected will have to have shown an ability to survive on their own.

Havana is likely to work to maintain and strengthen its ties with the relatively radical nations of Africa and the Middle East by undertaking a number of modest economic aid projects in these nations. An expansion of Cuban military assistance programs in Yemen (Aden) and Sierra

Leone is possible. At the same time, Castro will probably attempt to maintain his revolutionary credentials by continuing to provide funds, training, and material assistance to insurgents fighting against rightist governments in Africa.

The USSR, directly and through CEMA, will play a larger role in economic decision-making in Cuba, and this is bound to constrict Castro's room for maneuver. As this occurs, Castro seems likely to chafe occasionally. He has few alternatives to this sort of a relationship with the Soviet bloc. One possibility is that he could ease his stance toward the US. Though he is willing to deal with Washington on matters such as hijacking, he gives every evidence of finding a course toward rapprochement with Washington more distasteful than increasing subordination to Moscow. This being so, no serious Cuban effort to alter the present relationship appears likely for some time to come.

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